

Travis County Medical Alliance Austin, TX

The Travis County Medical Alliance (TMA) in Austin, Texas – a philanthropic group of physicians’ spouses – has donated 135 Realityworks Babies to their local middle and high schools since 1996.

“We’re always looking for something that pertains to the medical needs of our community,” said Karen Cosentino, a spokesperson for the group. “At one time we had one of the highest adolescent pregnancy rates in the state of Texas.”

Several members heard about the program and felt it might help.

The group started slowly, approaching three middle schools with the idea and purchasing six Babies that were shared among the teachers. If the teachers stuck with the curriculum for at least two years and found it effective, they planned to donate enough Babies to supply each school.

The teachers enthusiastically continued the program, so TMA dedicated one of their annual gala events to raising funds for the purchase of more Babies. Eventually they were able to put Babies in all of the middle and high schools in the Austin Independent School District. Today they allot about \$10,000 per year to buy more Babies for at least 15 schools, along with supplies, accessories, and any costs incurred for maintenance or repair.

“We have members who act as liaisons, and stay in touch with their teachers to keep their programs intact and get them anything they need for their class,” said Karen. “I think we’re doing a pretty good job, and the kids enjoy



the experience. We’ve had teachers tell us that students are so interested they sign up for their classes just to get Baby.

“Community organizations just need to decide that they want to make an impact at a certain level – either middle school or high school – contact their school district and see where it leads.”

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- Karen Cosentino, Travis County Medical Alliance